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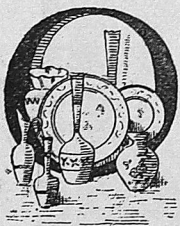
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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

ABOUT OUR TABLES.

BY HELEN ANDERSON.

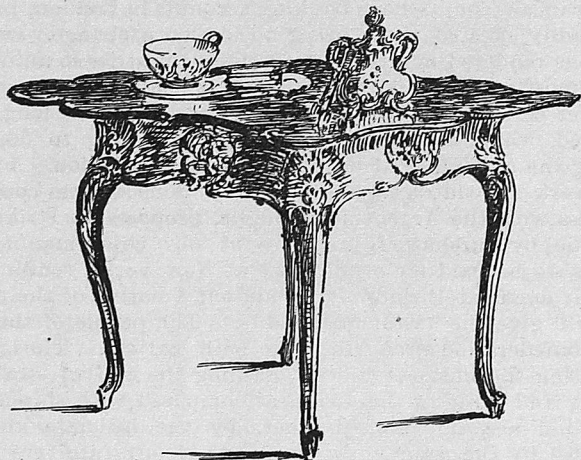


ONCE upon a time we were well content with one stiff and shiny table in the center of our best room, a table that made not the slightest pretense to drapery, not even a scarf. But to-day such a table in our modern houses would look like a desolate island in the sea, for almost every house abounds in little tables scattered in every possible nook and corner. Many of these are very dainty and artistic, a great many copied from old tables, and still a great many more purely American in make and design; and there are any amount of them made so heavily gorgeous, so overloaded with ornamentation that one feels under great obligations to the maker for giving entirely too much for the money.

Before furniture was turned out of factories by thousands and tens of thousands, the work being made by hand was, of course, more expensive, much more careful in form and execution, and it was utterly impossible to indulge in the cheap and gaudy style of decoration which is the mistake of the modern makers.

Many people fail to realize, or are indifferent to the fact, that a table costing \$30 cannot be duplicated for three. Although ambitious dealers in cheap furniture will make and advertise the attempt, the result is seldom satisfactory. In fact, after all the dainty form and finish has been lost, poor materials substituted, the imitation is so poor that it hardly justifies the term imitation at all. It is so hard for the majority to realize that one can more than get their money's worth, and, as the demand is for this style of work, it becomes quite a difficult matter to find a simple and good article that will not put its owner to shame by its unmistakable air of trying to be fine. Of course there is no trouble in finding good articles in first-class concerns, but unhappily it is just the plain style of work that is beyond the means of many who would appreciate it. So that although one may be able to find charming picturesque little tea-tables for thirty, twenty-five or even sixteen dollars, it is quite another matter when one starts out to find one for five or six dollars.

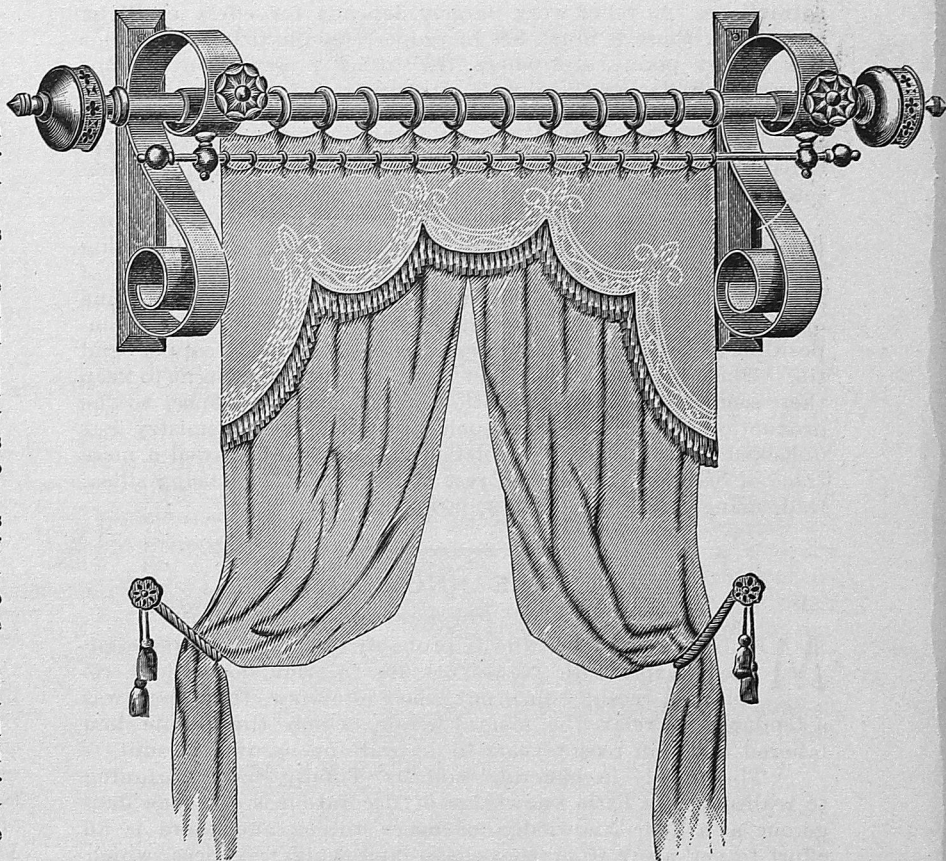
A beautiful little tea-table in the style of Louis XV, of which the sketch on this page gives a very good idea, has the top in onyx and the rest of the table in gilt. This would necessarily be very expensive, and only appreciated for a certain style of room, but the same design might be used in mahogany or cherry, or any other kind of wood that might be preferred. The use of



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such little tables, when the style is really good, is invaluable in helping out the decoration of a room; they break the monotony of an otherwise stiff-looking room and form centers around which people naturally group themselves. A pretty leaf or bit of drapery is of course an improvement to almost every table. Some very handsome tables or stands are made by the Japanese of teakwood with marble tops. In design they are straight and square, the legs beautifully carved, the only objection is they are very heavy-looking and so distinctly Japanese that they would be out of place in a room that did not in some way suggest the Japanese style in decoration. Some of these tables sell as low as six dollars and, considering their workmanship, seem very cheap.

A very inexpensive little table might be made for a library or sitting room of almost any wood one might fancy, and it might almost serve for a bookcase as it has ample room for books or papers. In construction it is something like a very high office stool, except that the top and shelves are square and it has four legs instead of three. At about a foot from the top a



NOVEL CORNICE POLE, BY MERSEREAU & CO.

second shelf is placed, and this is followed by three or four shelves the same shape as the top; of course the natural spread of the legs would make the bottom shelf considerably larger than the first, and these shelves are not only very odd and pretty, but are also very useful, with a few bits of pretty china on the top and the rest of the shelves used for books and papers; this makes a nice little tea-table for a library or general sitting room, and almost any carpenter could make one.

Many fanciful ideas are carried out in the way of tables now—some heart-shaped, some called kidney-shaped and others where both the heart and kidney shapes are combined, the one for the upper, the other for the lower shelf. They could hardly be called tea-tables, but, as they are small, they make a nice resting place for bric-a-brac, and are very appropriate for small rooms.

In the dining room of a prominent New York artist is a dining-table that might be used with good effect in many houses, and the expense of making such a table could, if one were handy, be said to be literally nothing, and the result, if only half as good as the original, would still be a very unique and artistic thing in the way of tables. In the first place a pair of ordinary wooden horses had been taken, painted white, then rubbed down to a fine enameled surface; upon these horses was placed a large piece of square wood very much like an enlarged drawing board, which had been previously been treated in the same manner as the horses. This board was then fastened to the horses by means of large brass headed nails. Of course the only part of this table which would be at all difficult to make would



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be the enamelling, as it generally takes from five to six coats of paint before it is rubbed down with pumicestone and oil. It might be made on the same plan, stained black and then finished with the brass headed nails, this would be very much easier to construct and would not require even the aid of a carpenter.